

Barry Northrop
PO Box 4998
Boulder, CO 80306

Assistant Secretary John Berry
c/o Document Management Unit
The Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW Mailstop-7229
Washington, DC 20240

7 December 1999

RE: Hawaiian sovereignty conciliation talks

Dear Secretary Berry,

I wish to have my comments entered into the record in the matter of the United States' takeover of the sovereign Hawaiian nation in 1893. From my study on the subject it is undeniable that the United States government illegally annexed the Hawaiian nation as its own territory. The question is what to do now?

The basic rule is when something is taken illegally, it is returned. That is what many Hawaiians are demanding. However, given the peculiarities of history this is not a given when a nation is involved. The intervening years have added many interests into the mix, so a carte blanche return to the Hawaiian monarchy is not going to happen. The U.S. government and private interests will not stand for it, and ultimately they are bigger than the Hawaiians and the rest of the world won't side with the Hawaiians in a conflict of force.

Nevertheless, the Hawaiians got the short end. The only remaining decency is restitution. There are several methods to determine proper restitution. One would be market value: what is the Hawaiian land mass worth in today's market? Though values would be disputed, the process itself is straightforward; it happens all the time in valuing real estate. The total value could be distributed among surviving Hawaiians and Hawaiian-run entities (governmental and administrative bodies, schools etc.). The payer would be the United States government and possibly some of the private companies that were involved in the original conflict.

But money alone does not suffice. Money is no substitute for the theft of a country. There must be land. The Hawaiian Homelands Act has been severely abused in my opinion. Held in trust for the Hawaiians, virtually no individuals have anything to show for it. I would propose adding a majority of Federal and state owned lands to the Homelands and turning it over to the Hawaiians. The market value of this land would be deducted from the monetary restitution.

Lastly, there must be some form of sovereignty. Today's Hawaiians are fragmented and factionalized. They have many opinions as to what form sovereignty ought to take. I have my own opinions, however it will ultimately rest with political realities. Honestly I would like to see a truly sovereign Hawaiian nation. The U.S. is fighting wars in Europe for sovereignty following the breakup of the Soviet Empire. We should be able to manage a peaceful reconstruction in Hawaii. The non-contiguous nature of the lands that I propose would be a problem, but nothing insurmountable. A team of advisors from Washington DC and Honolulu (state government) is suggested to aid in the start-up.

Apologies are nice but by themselves are an insult. Doing something demonstrable and in good faith such as I have outlined is required unless the U.S. government is really only interested in lip service until attrition wipes out the Hawaiians for good. It is not without some irony that the date of this letter is December 7th: a day that will live in infamy.

Sincerely,

